



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER PHIL ANGELIDES

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AS REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS UNVEIL LATEST PLANS TO SLASH EDUCATION, TREASURER ANGELIDES SAYS 'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH' ON STATEWIDE DRIVE FOR A BUDGET THAT PROTECTS SCHOOLS

ON ELEVENTH DAY OF THE NEW FISCAL YEAR WITHOUT A BUDGET, TREASURER JOINS PARENTS, EDUCATORS, RELIGIOUS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS TO URGE GOP LAWMAKERS TO END BUDGET STALEMATE AND TO SAVE SCHOOL SPENDING

LOS ANGELES, CA – California State Treasurer Phil Angelides today brought his fight to save school spending to the State's largest city, where he and other community leaders urged students, parents and educators to join the campaign for quick adoption of a "smart state budget that protects education, which is at the heart and soul of California's future."

Angelides spoke at a news conference at James A. Foshay Learning Center as the State began its eleventh day without a budget and as Senate Republicans unveiled a budget plan that includes about \$2.5 billion in education cuts for the current fiscal year. The Treasurer urged the Legislature to reject such deep education cuts. The Treasurer pointed out that those cuts add up to about a \$415 cut for each of the State's six million students – or more than \$10,000 for every public school classroom in the State.

"Enough is enough," Angelides said. "The Republican position on the budget is wrong for our children, wrong for the future of California and wrong for our long-term economic progress. It is time for the Republican leadership to step back from the precipice, come to the bargaining table and try to fashion a budget that protects our school children."

The Treasurer pointed out that the latest Senate Republican plan comes on the heels of a just defeated Assembly Republican budget plan that included about \$3.5 billion in education cuts for the current fiscal year that began July 1. The failed Assembly GOP plan proposed, among other things, delaying for a year the entrance to school of about 110,000 children scheduled to start kindergarten this August and September.

The Treasurer also pointed out that Republican legislative leaders have effectively delayed a budget resolution by refusing to consider any spending plan that includes a tax increase, and by threatening the political livelihood of any GOP lawmaker who falls out of line. Angelides warned that schools risk losing \$11 billion this year for specified, or "categorical" programs –

such as class-size reduction, special education, and child nutrition – if California remains ensnarled in a budget stalemate. That \$11 billion represents about 26 percent of what schools would otherwise receive from the State.

"None of us – Republican, Democrat or Independent – should ever forget that the most important thing we can do to seed the future of success is to educate our children," Angelides said. "Any combination of education cuts and budget delays will be hurtful to our students and their education, causing further chaos for classroom funding at a time when we can least afford to shortchange our investment in this State's future."

The Treasurer visited Los Angeles today as part of the second leg of a statewide drive he launched earlier this year, during which he visited schools from Eureka to San Diego – and many points between – to call on students, parents and educators to join together to campaign to save school spending from proposed state budget cuts. Most recently, he visited James McKee Elementary School in Sacramento County.

Angelides told those gathered at James A. Foshay Learning Center that he had both good news and bad news to report. The good news is that since the Treasurer began visiting public schools earlier this year, the Governor and Democratic lawmakers have restored some of the education funding that had been proposed for cuts in January. "We all deserve some credit for that," he said, "for sending a clear message to the decision makers in Sacramento that people up and down the State truly do care about quality schools, smaller class sizes and up-to-date text books. It shows we can make a difference."

As for the bad news, the Treasurer noted that the Republicans are holding up the budget by insisting on no tax increases and instead calling for even deeper education cuts – cuts that will be too hurtful to the younger generation that will grow up to become this State's next workforce. "Shouldn't these children be as best equipped as possible to take on that challenge?" he asked.

Joining the Treasurer at the news conference was the Rev. Norman Johnson, Executive Director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, who said, "This community has been hit hard by the state budget shortfall and this is exactly the time that lawmakers should be taking steps to address the needs of our neighborhoods with the goal of protecting our children's futures."

In addition, Marguerite Poindexter LaMotte, Board Member, District One, LAUSD said, "It is imperative that we make education our first priority in California and stop balancing the budget on the backs of kids and schools."

Angelides acknowledged that "no one likes new or higher taxes." But the Treasurer pointed to several economists, including Edward Leamer of the UCLA/Anderson Forecast and Nobel recipient Joseph Stiglitz, whose studies have concluded that deep spending cuts in areas like education will harm the economy.

In a letter earlier this year to the Governor and lawmakers, Angelides asked that additional revenue options be considered to fund education at the level needed to foster continued progress for future generations.

Nothing has transpired over the last year to lead Californians "to retreat from our commitment to first-class schools," the Treasurer wrote in his letter. "Indeed there is ample evidence that our increased investment in education over the past few years already has begun to yield positive results."

On Friday, the Treasurer pointed to a recent, well-respected public opinion poll that showed that Republican lawmakers are out of step with their constituents back home. The poll, conducted by the Public Policy Institute of California, reported that 67 percent of Californians are willing to pay higher taxes to maintain current funding for K-12 public education.

The Treasurer called on all Californians to contact Republican lawmakers and ask them a simple question: "Are they willing to stand with the two-thirds of Californians who want to protect education, even if it means paying a temporary tax increase to help us ride out this financial storm?"

The Treasurer also reminded everyone that there is much work to do for next year, too. "Once we get this budget behind us," he said, "it's imperative that we start immediately planning for next year's effort. We must vow that we will never again allow the forces of this State, who would deny our children a quality education, to hold our future hostage. Next year, we will take the lead, we will never let it go, and we will win the fight."

On Friday, after his remarks at James A. Foshay Learning Center, and a question-and-answer session with reporters, the Treasurer visited classrooms and spoke briefly with students. In addition to Johnson and LaMotte, others in attendance were Veronique Wills, Principal of James A. Foshay Learning Center; James E. Castillo, Representative of the Los Angeles Urban League; the Rev. Leonard Jackson, Assistant Pastor of First A.M.E. Church; Mignon Jackson, California Teachers Association Board member and Los Angeles Unified Teacher; Diane Person, representative of the parents of James A. Foshay students; Lois Jean Hill, former president of the California School Employees Association; the Rev. Isam Taylor, President of Baptist Ministers and Pastors Conference of Greater Los Angeles; the Rev. Roy Tettit, President of Black Agenda; the Rev. Joe Oliver, Outreach Coordinator of Ward African Methodist Episcopal Church; the Rev. Norman Copeland, President of the A.M.E. Ministerial Alliance; and the Rev. Clarence Clark, Member of the Clergy and Labor Coalition.